# LHMP ANNEX Town of Colma

## Introduction

The Town of Colma is a small city in San Mateo County, California. The Town has a population of 1,200 people, based on the 2000 census<sup>1</sup>, and the Town employs approximately 50 people. While the Town provides local police services, the fire services are supplied by a joint powers authority, the Colma Fire Protection District. Colma is best known as the home to 17 cemeteries and for its Serramonte Auto Row.

# The Planning Process

This process of preparing this plan was familiar to the Town of Colma. The Town has a Safety Element to its General Plan last updated in 1999 that includes a discussion of fire, earthquake, flooding, and landslide hazards. In addition, the Town routinely enforces the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements (which, since 1988, have required mitigation for identified natural hazards). The Town's effort has focused on building on these pre-existing programs and identifying gaps that may lead to disaster vulnerabilities in order to work on ways to address these risks through mitigation.

Many of the activities conducted by the Town were fed into the planning process for the multijurisdictional plan. The Town participated in various ABAG workshops and meetings, including the general "kick-off" meeting. In addition, the Town has provided written and oral comments on the multi-jurisdictional plan. Finally, the Town provided information on facilities that are viewed as "critical" to ABAG.

Key Town staff met on two occasions to identify and prioritize mitigation strategies appropriate for the Town. Staff involved in this meetings included the Planning Director, Building Official, Assistant City Manager, Public Works Director, and Police Chief. At the first meeting, the general priorities and appropriate Town departments were identified. The second meeting identified preliminary budgets and potential funding sources for strategies designed as "High" priority. The resolution adopting the plan and strategies was on the City Council agenda after receiving comments from FEMA and ABAG, at which time the public had an opportunity to comment. The mitigation strategies were adopted by the City Council on November 9, 2005 as an implementation appendix to the Safety Element.

### Hazard and Risk Assessment

The ABAG multi-jurisdictional Local Hazard Mitigation Plan, to which this is an Annex, lists nine hazards that impact the Bay Area, five related to earthquakes (faulting, shaking, earthquake-induced landslides, liquefaction, and tsunamis) and four related to weather (flooding, landslides,

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> For complete Census information on this Town, see <a href="http://www.bayareacensus.ca.gov/">http://www.bayareacensus.ca.gov/</a>. 2005 California Department of Finance population estimate is 1,350.

wildfires, and drought). Some of these hazards affect the Town of Colma. Surface faulting, tsunami, flooding and dam inundation hazards are not applicable to the Town of Colma, because there are no active faults within the Town boundaries, the Town is not located on the coastline or within a 100-year flood plain and there are no dams in the watershed above the Town.

While the Town has undertaken a number of general hazard mapping activities since the first Safety Element was prepared by the Town, all of these maps are less detailed and are not as current as those shown on the ABAG website at <a href="http://quake.abag.ca.gov/mitigation/">http://quake.abag.ca.gov/mitigation/</a>. The Town has not conducted any additional hazard assessment activities not referenced on the ABAG website.

Information on disasters declared in San Mateo County is at <a href="http://quake.abag.ca.gov/mitigation/disaster-history.html">http://quake.abag.ca.gov/mitigation/disaster-history.html</a>.

#### Hazard Threat to Urban Land

The Town examined the hazard exposure of urban land based on the information on ABAG's website at <a href="http://quake.abag.ca.gov/mitigation/pickdbh2.html">http://quake.abag.ca.gov/mitigation/pickdbh2.html</a>. Of the 1,251 acres in the Town,

- ♦ Earthquake faulting No active faults are located within the Town so rupture of a fault is not a direct concern.
- ◆ Earthquake shaking −1,211 acres are in the highest two categories of shaking potential, in large part because the San Andreas Fault is located approximately two miles west of the Town;
- ♦ Earthquake-induced landslides the California Geological Survey has not completed mapping of this hazard in the Town of Colma. However, because few areas have been mapped as landslides, this hazard is viewed as similar to that posed by weather-related hazards.
- ♦ Earthquake liquefaction 80 acres are in areas of moderate, high, or very high liquefaction susceptibility primarily related to the Colma Creek corridor;
- ♦ Tsunamis 0 acres are in areas threatened by inundation.
- ♦ Flooding 0 acres are in the 100-year flood plain.
- ♦ Landslides –.47 acres are in areas of few landslides;
- ♦ Wildfires 63 acres are subject to high or very high wildfire threat (because of the urban nature of the Town), but 987 acres are in wildland-urban interface threat areas.
- ♦ Dam Inundation 0 acres are subject to dam inundation.
- ◆ Drought all 1,251 acres are subject to drought.

## **Hazard Threat to Infrastructure**

The Town also examined the hazard exposure of infrastructure based on the information on ABAG's website at <a href="http://quake.abag.ca.gov/mitigation/pickdbh2.html">http://quake.abag.ca.gov/mitigation/pickdbh2.html</a>. Of the 38 miles of roadway in the Town,

- ♦ Earthquake faulting No active faults are located within the Town so rupture of a fault is not a direct concern.
- ♦ Earthquake shaking 38 miles of roadway are in the highest category of shaking potential.

- ◆ Earthquake-induced landslides the California Geological Survey has not completed mapping of this hazard in the Town of Colma. However, this is unlikely to be an issue because no roads are in existing landslide areas.
- ♦ Earthquake liquefaction 2 miles of roadway are in areas of moderate, high, or very high liquefaction susceptibility.
- ♦ Tsunamis There is no tsunami inundation risk in Colma.
- ♦ Flooding No roadways are located in the 100-year flood plain or flood prone areas.
- ♦ Landslides no roads are in areas of existing landslides.
- ♦ Wildfires only 1 mile of roadway is subject to high, very high, or extreme wildfire threat, 32 miles of roads are in wildland-urban interface threat areas.
- ♦ Dam Inundation no roadway is in an area subject to dam inundation.
- ♦ Drought is not a hazard for roadways, but could damage median landscaping.

#### Hazard Threat to Critical Facilities

Finally, the Town examined the hazard exposure of critical health care facilities, schools, and Town-owned buildings based on the information on ABAG's website at <a href="http://quake.abag.ca.gov/mitigation/pickcrit.html">http://quake.abag.ca.gov/mitigation/pickcrit.html</a>. Of the critical facilities in the Town,

- ♦ Earthquake faulting No active faults are located within the Town so rupture of a fault is not a direct concern.
- ◆ Earthquake shaking Town Hall is in the highest two categories of shaking potential.
- ♦ Earthquake-induced landslides the California Geological Survey has not completed mapping of this hazard in the Town of Colma. However, this is unlikely to be an issue because no roads are in existing landslide areas.
- ◆ Earthquake liquefaction Subsurface soil conditions at the Senior Housing Complex, City Hall Annex and the Police Facility sites were stabilized during construction, which occurred within the last fifteen years; the Town Hall, built in 1936, may be susceptible to liquefaction.
- ♦ Tsunamis There is no tsunami inundation risk in Colma.
- ♦ Flooding No Town-owned facilities are in either the 100-year flood plain or in other flood-prone areas.
- ♦ Landslides No Town-owned facilities are in areas of existing landslides.
- ♦ Wildfires No Town-owned facilities are located within wildland-urban interface threat areas
- ◆ Dam Inundation no Town-owned facilities are in an area subject to dam inundation.
- ◆ Drought Drought will not affect Town buildings directly. The Town does not operate a water-supply distribution system.

The Town plans to work with ABAG during 2005 to improve the risk assessment information being compiled by ABAG by providing information on unreinforced masonry buildings and softstory apartments located in the Town.

Drought, though a potential problem in the Town, is not fully assessed. The Town will work with ABAG and various water supply agencies on this issue.

The Town plans to work with ABAG to develop specific information about the kind and level of damage to buildings, infrastructure, and critical facilities which might result from any of the hazards previously noted. The ABAG Annex states that ABAG will be doing this work in 2005 through early 2006.

As these impacts are not fully developed, the Town has reviewed the hazards identified and ranked the hazards based on past disasters and expected future impacts. The conclusion is that earthquakes (particularly shaking), flooding, wildfire, and landslides (including unstable earth) pose a significant risk for potential loss.

## Mitigation Activities and Priorities

As a participant in the ABAG multi-jurisdictional planning process, Town of Colma staff helped in the development and review of the comprehensive list of mitigation strategies in the overall multi-jurisdictional plan. The list was discussed at a meeting of the City Manager, Police Chief, Fire Chief, Building Official, Public Works Director and City Planner on June 28, 2005. At the meeting, all of the mitigation strategies were reviewed. Several are existing Town programs. The tentative decision on priority was made based on a variety of criteria, not simply on an economic cost-benefit analysis. These criteria include being technically and administratively feasible, politically acceptable, socially appropriate, legal, economically sound, and not harmful to the environment or our heritage.

Over time, we are committed to developing better hazard and risk information to use in making those trade-offs. We are not trying to create a disaster-proof region, but a disaster-resistant one.

These draft priorities were submitted to the City Manager for review. After sending the draft priorities to ABAG and FEMA for review, comments were received and addressed and the priorities were then provided to the City Council on November 9, 2005. The public was provided with an opportunity to comment on the draft priorities at that time. The final strategies (as shown in the attached Table) will become an *Implementation Appendix* to the Town's *Safety Element*.

In addition, the Town examined the hazard exposure information to Town-owned critical facilities supplied by ABAG. The Town has determined that the combination of construction type, age, and shaking exposure affecting the Colma Fire Station is significant. Therefore, the Town plans to apply for a Pre-Disaster Mitigation grant to retrofit this fire station.

# The Plan Maintenance and Update Process

The Town of Colma City Manager's Office will ensure that monitoring of this Annex will occur. The plan will be monitored on an on-going basis. However, the major disasters affecting our community, legal changes, notices from ABAG as the lead agency in this process, and other triggers will be used. Finally, the Annex will be a discussion item on the agenda of the meeting

of Town department heads hold at least once a year in April. At that meeting, the department heads will focus on evaluating the Annex in light of technological, political or other changes during the past year. This group will be responsible for determining if the plan should be updated.

The Town of Colma is committed to reviewing and updating this plan annex at least once every five years, as required by the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000. The City Planner will contact ABAG four years after this plan is approved to ensure that ABAG intends to lead the plan update process. If so, the Town again plans to participate in the multi-jurisdictional plan. If ABAG is unwilling or unable to act as the lead agency in the multi-jurisdictional effort, other agencies will be contacted, including the County's Office of Emergency Services. Counties should then work together to identify another regional forum for developing a multi-jurisdictional plan.

The public will continue to be involved whenever the plan is updated and as appropriate during the monitoring and evaluation process. Prior to adoption of updates, the Town will provide the opportunity for the public to comment on the updates. A public notice will be posted prior to the meeting to announce the comment period and meeting logistics.